



Plant Milkweed and Build a Village for Monarchs

A Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*) floating on a summer breeze brings a smile to our face and joy to our heart. They are so beautiful and graceful as they glide and flutter. They are inspiring as symbols of rebirth and travelers on a great migration. Many are concerned about the Monarch population since reports started indicating that populations at their overwintering sites in Mexico were dropping. Estimates on the reduction average between 80 and 90% from populations 20 years ago.

The decrease in Monarchs is probably not due to a single issue but a combination of many including: use of herbicides on farms and roadsides reducing butterfly habitat, logging and industry in Mexico reducing habitat, and climate changes including severe weather. The winter in Mexico in 2012 destroyed 500 million butterflies. Use of pesticides certainly has an effect also.

Loss of habitat really means loss of Milkweed which is the only host plant used by Monarchs. Host plants serve as a nursery for butterfly eggs and a food source for the caterpillars after they hatch. The female butterfly lays one egg on one Milkweed. She may lay over 400 eggs so she has to find 400 Milkweeds! Good thing she can find them from over a mile away. She can use her vision to locate the plants but also uses receptors in her antennae and feet. So, as you can see, without Milkweed we will have no Monarch butterflies.

After hatching on the Milkweed,

the caterpillar will eat and grow, molting a few times, the last of which starts the chrysalis or pupa stage. The adult butterfly emerges from the chrysalis and after a few hours of drying, it unfurls its wings and begins to search for food. After a few weeks, the cycle begins all over again with the laying of eggs on Milkweed. Only about 1% of those eggs will actually become an adult butterfly.

The Monarch selects Milkweed for a very special reason. In addition to being a good food source, Milkweed offers extra protection. One of the chemicals in the white sticky sap in Milkweed is a glycoside that is safe for the caterpillar to eat, but a toxin to any bird that may eat the caterpillar. Birds quickly learn to avoid this caterpillar.

There are over 70 species of Milkweed and Missouri has several of these. The most prevalent species are Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) and Butterflyweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*). Milkweed has adapted to a wide range of habitats from swamps to sunny prairies. Like many native plants, its amazing root system enables it to survive in many different environments and weather conditions. Milkweed has a pretty remarkable way of spreading its seed. Each plant will grow pods which eventually dry and split open. Each seed inside is attached to a little fuzzy fluff which catches a ride on the wind until it falls to the ground and the seed starts its lifecycle all over again.

So, what can you do to help the Monarch? Include native plants like the Milkweed in your gardens and landscapes. There are so many reasons to do so besides helping the Monarchs and other pollinators. Native plants are hardy, require less care, less water, and last for years. Usually because of their hardy nature they require you to use less chemicals which is good for the environment and us. Native plants help control erosion with their deep root system. The beauty they bring to the garden is many fold as they are pretty on their own but they also attract colorful birds and insects. Many people will complain that native plants are invasive. Most, however, are easy to control with some effort.

Plant other varieties of native plants to serve as nectar or food sources for the adult butterflies. They love Purple Coneflowers, Black-Eyed Susan, Blazing Star, and Buttonbush. Add a water source and you have created a haven for Monarchs. You can enjoy both the flowers and the knowledge that you are helping the Monarch.

For additional information about native plants, check out <http://grownative.org/>. For additional information about Monarchs, check out <http://www.monarchwatch.org/> or <http://missouriansformonarchs.blogspot.com/>.

--Jamie Koehler
Assistant Nature Center Manager

Volunteer Corner

Special Volunteers and Special Memories

Life creates some very special moments for all of us. Birthdays, weddings, graduations, and first steps are memories that last a lifetime. Nature also offers us some very special moments. A spectacular sunrise, an elk bugle in the distance, and a musical moment on the edge of a pond with the spring peeper chorus connects us to nature. We asked our volunteers to share some of their most special moments or memories that happened here at the Nature Center and their stories reflect their great passion for sharing nature with others.

Jennifer Behnken, a long time Nature Center volunteer recalls, "Once I had a visitor on a hike that was overcoming health issues. She admitted to being afraid of things in nature and after the hike, she thanked me for a wonderful experience. I was proud to see her taking the challenge of the steep terrain and feeling more confident about herself and the natural world around her. It's always a fantastic feeling of empowering someone else and making a positive difference."

Special moments shared with children always create memories. Jeanie Haertling, Nature Center volunteer, is always quick to help our visitors learn new skills and feel good about themselves. Recently she shared an extraordinary moment with a young man with a vision impairment. She coached his brothers into helping him fire his first arrow at a target. All of them cheered when his arrow struck the target with a resounding "thunk." The look of happiness on all of their faces reflected his joy at being successful at something he had never tried before. Jeanie had just one word to describe how she felt afterwards, "Awesome".

Karin Pelton, a newer volunteer, shared her favorite memory of an evening on the Mississippi with Missouri Department of Conservation staff and volunteers as they collected juvenile sturgeon to learn more about the river habitat. "The Mississippi is just so amazing and being on it connects all of us together, connects us to history, and connects us to the natural world. What an adventure we had."

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month and one of the times we make sure our volunteers know how important they are to our mission. They are special people with big smiles and big hearts. We could not do what we do at the Nature Center without them. Please join us in saying a big "Thank you" to all of them. For more information about volunteering, please contact Jamie Koehler at 573-290-5858 ext. 4461.

Volunteer Milestones

1000 Hours

Jeanie Haertling

Byron Foust

2000 Hours

Ken Jones

Donna Magwitz

2500 Hours

Pat Wells



Tadpoles

(Shared nature experiences for 0-2 year olds and an attending adult.)



March

Saturday, March 19-9 or 10 AM

What's Underground?

Do you know what lives underground? Are they cute and fuzzy or creepy crawly? Discover with your little one what they could be through a puppet show and activities.

Ages 0-2. Registration begins March 1.

April

Saturday, April 30-9 or 10 AM

Yip, Yip Hooray!

Coyote pups are being born this time of year! What does their home look like? What do they eat? How do they communicate? Listen to sounds and stories as we learn more about these wild canines.

Ages 0-2. Registration begins April 1.

May

Saturday, May 28-9 or 10 AM

Let's Go Camping!

Camping in the outdoors is a lot of fun! Let's find out some of the things it takes to go camping such as tents, lanterns, and sleeping bags. We will practice camping and tell some stories to learn more.

Ages 0-2. Registration begins May 3.

Kids' Club Program Information

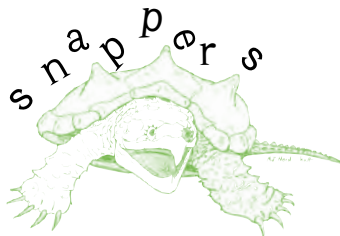
March

Saturday, March 26

10-11:30 AM

Letterboxing

Looking for a fun way to discover nature? Why not try letterboxing? Learn all about this sport as we follow clues to find hidden boxes along the White Oak Trace trail. Then use your new letterboxing skills to find hidden boxes all over the world. *Ages 7-11. Registration begins March 1.*



April

Saturday, April 9

10-11:30 AM

Life in Miniature

Discover an entirely new world as we investigate micro and macro wildlife. Some of the most important animals in Missouri are too small to see with the naked eye. Using microscopes we will reveal nature's miniature life.

Ages 7-11. Registration begins April 1.

May

Saturday, May 14

1-3 PM

Canoeing Challenge

Whether you've been in a canoe before or not, this challenge is for you! We'll go over basic canoe techniques and safety before we put our boats out on the fishing pond to improve our skills and play a few games.

Ages 7-11. Registration begins May 3.

Mudpuppies

(45-minute indoor/outdoor programs for 3-6 year olds and an attending adult.)



March

Tuesday, March 15-9 AM or 10:30 AM

A Fungus Among Us

For fun-guys and gals alike! We'll discover the amazing and unusual world of mushrooms from puffballs to morels. We'll go out to see mushrooms growing around the nature center, weather permitting.

Ages 3-6. Registration begins March 1.

April

Saturday, April 9-9:30 AM or 11 AM

Tuesday, April 12-9 AM or 10:30 AM

Totally Turkey

Cluck, hiss, gobble, help! Come learn the language of Missouri's turkeys. We'll see how the turkey grows and how they survive as they wander our woods.

Ages 3-6. Registration begins April 1.

May

Saturday, May 14-9:30 AM or 11 AM

Tuesday, May 17-9 AM or 10:30 AM

Beetlemania

From the seemingly dainty Ladybug to the mighty Hercules beetle, Missouri is home to hundreds of beetles. Bring out your little beetle to join in the craze as we find out what is a beetle and what is not.

Ages 3-6. Registration begins May 3.

Kids' Corner

Number the life stages of the monarch butterfly 1 through 4 in the correct order.









Answers: Chrysalis-3, Egg-1, Butterfly-4, Caterpillar-2

Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center

2289 County Park Drive, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 • mdc.mo.gov/node/297

MARCH

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 573-290-5218 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Women's Hike: Holly Ridge Conservation Area

March 5 • Saturday • 8 AM–4 PM

Registration begins February 16 (ages 14+)

Come enjoy the spring air as a naturalist leads you on the trails at a unique and beautiful natural area. This area features plants and animals of conservation concern and resembles forests in Arkansas and Tennessee more than the typical Ozark woods. Hike is 4.5 miles and rated moderate. This program is for women only. Girls ages 14-17 accompanied by an adult female are welcome.



Nature Art: Adding Color to Our Journals

March 5 • Saturday • 1–3 PM

Registration begins February 16 (ages 16+)

Add color to your nature journal with basic watercolor painting. If you are interested in trying watercolor or if you have dabbled a bit with this medium, this program is for you. Supplies provided for use during the class.

Feeding Frenzy

March 10 • Thursday • 1–2:30 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Ever wonder what it takes to keep all of the nature center reptiles, amphibians, and fish happy? Thanks to some amazing animal care volunteers, they are fed a delicious smorgasbord of crickets, worms, minnows, and more! Drop by to visit with the volunteers and staff as they feed the hungry critters. Youth and adult groups welcome.

Native Plant Seminar

March 12 • Thursday • 8 AM–2:30 PM

Registration begins February 2 (ages 14+)

Working together in our gardens and natural areas to help the Monarch butterfly is this year's theme. Our keynote speaker, Bob Lee of Missourians for Monarchs, will tell us about the current concerns about Monarch populations and how we can help. Other topics include identifying garden bugs, pruning trees, propagation and seed starting, maximizing garden space, and rare native plants. Vendors will be available offering native plants, trees, shrubs, and garden related items.

Nature Center at Night: A Fungus Among Us

March 17 • Thursday • 5–8 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Delicious or deadly? Missouri is home to hundreds of mushrooms of all shades and shapes. Check out our display to learn about some of the most common mushrooms in the state. Youth and adult groups welcome.

Missourians care about conserving forests, fish and wildlife.

Purple Martins Need Our Help

March 17 • Thursday • 6–7 PM

Registration begins March 1 (ages 16+)

Purple martins have become totally dependent on human-provided housing. For this species to sustain its population, they need our help. John Miller, a volunteer with the Purple Martin Conservation Association, will share the history of the bond between martins and humans, the best housing and placement, steps to assure a colony returns each year and grows, and new information about migration.

Turkey Hunting Basics

March 19 • Saturday • 9 AM–NOON

Registration begins March 1 (ages 10+)

Join experienced turkey hunters to learn the basics of harvesting a Missouri gobbler. Learn about regulations, safety, equipment, and strategy in the field.

Homeschool Special: Missouri Bats

March 24 • Thursday •

10–11:30 AM or 1–2:30 PM

Registration begins March 1 (Ages 6-15)

Become a friend to bats by building a bat house! Bats are very beneficial mammals that we don't want to lose. Learn some bat basics and current issues that affect Missouri's bats.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center is located in North Cape Girardeau County Park off Kingshighway just east of Interstate 55 at exit 99.

The Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center is operated through hunting and fishing license revenues and through the 1/8% "Design for Conservation" sales tax. There is no admission charge.

BUILDING HOURS

Tuesday–Saturday: 8 AM–5 PM

Closed Sundays, Mondays,
and all state holidays.

AREA HOURS

Daily: Sunrise–10 PM in accordance with the Cape Girardeau County Park

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Nature center grounds and trails are closed to pets, horses, hunting, collecting, littering, fires, and alcoholic beverages. The trails are also closed to bicycles, jogging, in-line skates, skateboards, scooters, and motorized vehicles.

Phone: 573-290-5218

Fax: 573-290-5566

Pond Management Workshop

March 24 • Thursday • 6–9 PM

Registration begins March 1 (ages 14+)

Attention pond owners! Have you ever wanted to know how to improve your pond fishery? How to deal with nuisance aquatic plants? What fish to harvest and what fish to stock? Here is your chance to learn the answers to these questions and more.

Natural Egg Dyeing

March 26 • Saturday • 1–3 PM

Registration begins March 1 (ages 12+)

Skip the dye kit this year and learn how to use native plants to create stunning eggs. We'll create nature printed eggs in a range of colors using native plants and kitchen scraps. We'll supply the eggs, plants, and dye.

Art Gallery-March

See past the big things and gaze on the amazing world of the tiny in this month's art exhibit, "Life in Miniature". Fascinated by all things great and small, naturalist, Jordi Brostoski turns her attention to the smallest living things around Southeast Missouri for this exhibit.

Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center

2289 County Park Drive, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 • mdc.mo.gov/node/297

APRIL

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 573-290-5218 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Women's Nature Art Weekend

April 1 • Friday • 1 PM –

April 2 • Saturday • 5 PM

Registration begins March 15 (ages 18 and up)

This overnight retreat will include hiking and observing spring beauty and then expressing it through art work. Projects will include scrapbooking and nature journaling. There will be lots of time outside followed by creative time using a variety of techniques. Explore and discover nature, your artistic talents, and create some amazing memories.

Discover Nature Fishing (Lesson 1)

April 2 • Saturday • 9-11 AM or

April 9 • Saturday • NOON-2 PM

Registration begins March 15 (ages 7-15)

****Lesson 1 is a prerequisite to participate in the final three lessons.**

(Lesson 2)**

April 9 • Saturday • 1:15-3:15 PM or

April 30 • Saturday • 9-11 AM

Registration begins April 1 (ages 7-15)

(Lesson 3)**

April 16 • Saturday • 9-11 AM

Registration begins April 1 (ages 7-15)

(Lesson 4)**

April 30 • Saturday • 10:15 AM-12:15 PM

Registration begins April 1 (ages 7-15)

Discovery Table: Talking Turkey

April 2 • Saturday • 1-3:30 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Puts, purrs, and yelps are just a few things turkeys are saying. Drop by to visit our hands-on displays to learn more about this chatty bird. Youth and adult groups welcome.

Nature Center at Night:

What's the Buzz?

April 7 • Thursday • 5–8 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Birds, bees, butterflies, even bats help the flowers out with pollination. Discover how pollinators play an important role in a plant's life cycle. Learn ways we can help out as they do their important work. Youth and adult groups welcome.

Riverfront Clean-Up

April 9 • Saturday • 9-11 AM

Early registration begins March 1 (all ages)

Help us tackle the trash on the riverfront, Cape Rock, and Red Star Access in downtown Cape! Gather your friends, family, or organization to pick up trash on foot or by boat. Youth and adult groups welcome.

Wednesday Wildflower Walk

April 13 • Wednesday • 12:30–4 PM

Registration begins April 1 (ages 12+)

Join a nature center volunteer for a walk at Seventy-Six Conservation Area to see wildflowers blooming at this unique area.

Amazing Amphibians

April 15 • Friday • 4-7 PM

No registration required (all ages)

It's a tale of two lives; see what it takes to grow up amphibian. It will be a night of fun as you meet live salamanders, toads and frogs. Come by and make a craft to take home or stroll down to the pond on a naturalist-led frog chorus walk.

Family Treasure Hunting with a GPS

April 16 • Saturday • 1-4 PM

Registration begins April 1 (ages 8+)

Parents, grandparents, and adult mentors, bring your youngster(s) to learn a new outdoor skill. Geocaching is an outdoor "treasure" hunt using GPS units. We'll go over basic GPS use and then hit the trails to find some "treasure." Dress for the weather. GPS units provided. Ages 8 and up with an adult mentor.

Meet the Artist

April 16 • Saturday • 1-4 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Stop by to meet Dave Carter as he creates animal paintings based on photos he took through the windows of his Cape Girardeau home. Having spent most of his life in northern Missouri, Dave is accustomed to very different fauna and finds southeast Missouri "critters" fascinating.

Bashin' Trash: Cape LaCroix Creek

April 23 • Saturday • 9 AM-NOON

Early registration begins March 1 (all ages)

The nature center is partnering with the Cape Girardeau Parks & Recreation Department to clean up Cape LaCroix Creek during their annual Park Day. Gather your friends, family, or organization to help bring the beauty back to the creek between Walden Park and Shawnee Sports Complex. We'll meet at the 4-H Shelter in Arena Park to divide and conquer. Lunch and t-shirts will be provided at Capaha Park afterwards. Youth and adult groups welcome.

A Southeast Earth Day

April 23 • Saturday • 1-4 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Come celebrate Earth Day with us as we focus on the amazing plants, animals, and habitats southeast Missouri has to offer. Walk the trail to answer trivia questions or to just enjoy a nice spring day. Stop by the classroom to make and take a recycled Earth Day craft. Enjoy a nature film in the auditorium or sit and watch the birds at our bird viewing area. There's something for everyone at the nature center. Youth and adult groups welcome.

Wednesday Wildflower Walk

April 27 • Wednesday • 1–4 PM

Registration begins April 1 (ages 12+)

Join a nature center volunteer for a walk at Trail of Tears State Park to see the early blooming wildflowers of spring.

Bats of Missouri

April 27 • Wednesday • 6:30-7:30 PM

Registration begins April 1 (ages 8+)

Missouri is home to at least 14 different species of bats. Learn about these different species, where they live, how common they are and methods used to research and monitor them. You will also explore and discuss the importance of bats to the environment and humans as well as current threats to these fascinating creatures.

Don't Let Your Bucket List Rust

April 28 • Thursday • 6:30-7:30 PM

No registration required (ages 8+)

Think you're too busy to go play outside? Whether you like hiking, canoeing, fishing, birding, camping or learning about nature, outdoor enthusiasts Steve Craig & Amy Short will inspire you to adventure into Missouri's outdoors. Join them for a program full of information, humor, magic and photography. Steve and Amy have been exploring Missouri for a lifetime and together for over 30 years. Learn why they say, "Go. Out. Today." Youth and adult groups welcome.

Spring Flower Presses

April 30 • Saturday • 1–2:30 PM

Registration begins April 1 (ages 12+)

Spring wildflowers are here and gone in just a few, short weeks. Enjoy them year round by making a flower press. We will also find and identify local flora and learn how to ethically collect flowers. Adult supervision is required for ages 12-17.

Art Gallery-April

Visit the lobby in April to view "Outside My Window," which features oil paintings of squirrels and birds by local artist Dave Carter.

Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center

2289 County Park Drive, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 • mdc.mo.gov/node/297

Nature's Superheroes with WildHeart

May 6 • Friday • 7-8 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Explore "Nature's Super Heroes" with Emmy® Award winning singers and songwriters, Jan and George Syrigos. Kids will love to sing along with Nature's Super Heroes, grooving to new moves and joining in on the adventure! Held inside if there is inclement weather. Youth and adult groups welcome.

Mother's Day Tea

May 7 • Saturday • 1-3 PM

Registration begins April 15 (ages 5+)

Come celebrate your mother (or mother figure) while you sip and nibble on teas and treats made from native plants. We'll stroll the garden to point out native edibles and pot a native plant for you to take home! Adult supervision required for ages 5-17.

We help people discover nature.

Meet the Artist

May 7 • Saturday • 2-4 PM

No registration required (all ages)

After recently moving from Montana, Jenny Davenport refocused her photography to small-scale nature in the process of learning about her new home in Missouri. This exhibit is her attempt to capture the incredible intricacies of nature and the wonder it inspires in her.

Wednesday Wildflower Walk

May 11 • Wednesday • 1-4 PM

Registration begins May 3 (ages 12+)

Join a nature center volunteer for our last wildflower walk of spring at General Watkins Conservation Area.

Nature Center at Night: The Lorax

May 12 • Thursday • 5-8 PM

No registration required (all ages)

Bring the family to a screening of the classic Dr. Seuss' story, the Lorax. The movie will start at 6 pm in our auditorium. Please come early to look through our exhibits. Youth and adult groups welcome.

Nature Art: Summer's Coming

May 12 • Thursday • 6-8 PM

Registration begins May 3 (ages 16+)

It will soon be time for all of our favorite outdoor activities and we will need scrapbook pages to record them. Whether you like to hike, camp, fish, or watch wildlife, we'll make a two page layout to document these precious memories.

Discover Nature Fishing (Lesson 1)**

May 12 • Thursday • 5-7 PM

Registration begins May 3 (ages 7-15)

****Lesson 1 is a prerequisite to participate in Lesson 2.**

(Lesson 2)**

May 19 • Thursday • 5-7 PM

Registration begins May 3 (ages 7-15)

Dutch Oven and Campfire Cooking

May 14 • Saturday •

9:30 AM-NOON or 1-3:30 PM

Registration begins May 3 (ages 12+)

Camping season is here! Learn some techniques and recipes to make family meals both fun and tasty. This will be a hands-on course, so be prepared to lend a hand in the kitchen and get a little smoky at the fire pit.

Homeschool Special: We all need trees!

May 19 • Thursday •

10-11:30 AM or 1-2:30 PM

Registration begins May 3 (ages 6-15)

From paper to chewing gum, we receive many gifts from the forest. Explore the many uses of trees for humans and wildlife. Go out and meet trees as we learn how to tell them apart.

Flyfishing

May 20 • Friday • 6-8:30 PM or

May 21 • Saturday • 8:30-11:30 AM

Registration begins May 3 (ages 16+)

Learn the basics of flyfishing or pick up a few new technical skills. We'll cover equipment selection and use, reading the water, matching the hatch, fly casting, fishing techniques, and essential knots. Flyfishing equipment available for loan.

Volunteer Open House

May 21 • Saturday • 1-3 PM

No registration required (ages 14+)

Volunteering at the nature center is fun, educational and rewarding. Volunteers will be doing their various jobs throughout the nature center during the open house. You can stop by and see what it is all about and how you can become part of the team. This opportunity may be just what you are looking for.

Art Gallery-May

Visit the nature center's lobby this month to view, "A Bug's Eye View of Southeast Missouri," a collection of small-scale nature photography by Jenny Davenport.

MAY

TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 573-290-5218 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

Conservation Destination: Castor River CA

May 28 • Saturday • 8:30 AM-4 PM

Registration begins May 3 (ages 12+)

Join us for a spring hike within the beautiful Castor River Conservation Area. We'll explore Blue Pond natural area with its deep sinkhole pond as we hike along the trails. **Hike is 4.5 miles and rated moderate.** Adult supervision required for ages 12-17.

COMING IN JUNE

Aquatic Adventure Camp

June 14-15, June 16-17, June 28-29, June 30-July 1, or July 12-13

8:30 AM-4:30 PM

Early registration begins May 17 (ages 7-11)

From tiny streams to the mighty Mississippi, this year's camp highlights southeast Missouri's aquatic habits. Get wet as we find out who lives where and why.

Discover Nature: Women's Canoeing

June 4 • Saturday • 12:30-2 PM

Registration begins May 17 (ages 12+)

We will cover boating safety, equipment, and paddling techniques before spending time practicing on the North County Park Lake. All equipment provided.

Conservation pays by enriching our economy and quality of life.

Discover Nature: Family Canoeing

June 4 • Saturday • 2:30-4 PM

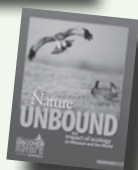
Registration begins May 17 (ages 7+)

We will cover boating safety, equipment, and paddling techniques before spending time practicing on the North County Park Lake. All equipment provided.

Educators' Niche

Discover Nature Schools

The Discover Nature Schools (DNS) program provides new and interesting curriculum that incorporates hands-on outdoor activities featuring Missouri ecosystems. Teaching students outside has been shown to help improve test scores and help with behavior issues. Each unit comes with excellent teacher and student guides. These materials are free to public, private, or homeschool educators. Grant monies are also available for field trips and supplies for K-12 teachers in the public or private school sectors. Please contact Bridget Jackson for training information at bridget.jackson@mdc.mo.gov or call 573-290-5858 ext 4464.



Nature Deficit Tidbit

Ten years ago, Richard Louv coined the term "Nature Deficit Disorder" to describe the disconnect children have with the outside world. Children still seem to prefer being inside and playing with electronics than exploring outside. Due to safety reasons, parents often prefer that as well. So, here is a fun and important ecological way to encourage children to be outside by gardening in their own backyards. Plant milkweed plants for monarch butterflies. While once very common, several things have happened in recent years that have put monarchs in peril. One of these things is that their primary caterpillar food source, milkweed plants, are being lost. There are several milkweed species that are native to Missouri. They grow best in full sun. Children love to watch as all four stages of the monarch life cycle play out and it gets them out of the house and into the sun.

Ask the Naturalist

Q. I found a young bird on the ground, what should I do?



A. Let it be. Most birds go through a fledging phase; this means they leave the nest even though they aren't ready to fly. These birds are usually covered partially in feathers and can stand. The parents of the fledgling will come and feed the young one while it is on the ground. Over the years I've had phone calls from well-meaning people that complained of being dive-bombed by birds when they were trying to rescue an "abandoned" bird they found on the ground. Animal offspring grow up differently than we do, but just like us, they have to go through some difficult stages. Fledging may seem strange to us but it is completely necessary. Instead of swooping in to rescue them, take the opportunity to watch one of nature's wonders in action. Watch the bird grow from a distance; it's a joy to watch how quickly they go from nest to flying.

*Conservation Heritage Card discounts do not apply

20% Off* these monthly specials!

What's HOT in the NATURE SHOP!

March/April

Missouri Wildflowers

This revised, sixth edition has a new look. Dennison's classic now has larger pages, type and pictures for improved readability. Colored tabs have been added for easier location of flower color groups. The taxonomy has been updated in accordance with the most current naming conventions.



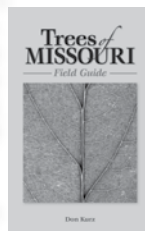
Discounted price:
\$11.20 plus tax

May/June

Trees of Missouri Field Guide

Based on Don Kurz's original Trees of Missouri, this concise, easy-to-carry field guide will help you identify trees in your yard, neighborhood, or natural area.

- 174 species described
- Range map for each species
- Full-color illustrations
- Easy-to-understand descriptions




Discounted price:
\$6.00 plus tax

Thank You

for donations of Time, Material,
and Service

Snake Pictures: Ken Truska
Deer Pelt Rug: Pat Summers
in memory of Jim Summers



April 15th

4 - 7 pm

- Frog chorus walk
- Crafts
- Live amphibians

amazing amphibians

*Take Action!
Get Involved!*

Bashin' Trash

River Clean-Up

Earth Day



April 9th

Riverfront Clean-Up

April 23rd

Bashin' Trash

April 23rd

A Southeast Earth Day

Get the details inside.

Cape Girardeau

Conservation Nature Center

573-290-5218